

WASHINGTON, DC – Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (D-MD) released the following statement in support of the NASA Authorization Act of 2005 which the House of Representatives passed today. Rep. Hoyer represents the Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt and vigorously supports a servicing mission to repair the Hubble Space Telescope.

“This is a good bill for NASA, for Goddard Space Flight Center in my district, and the American people. The bill restores our investment in a more vigorous, forward-looking space agency and provides multi-year funding and detailed policy guidance to NASA at a critical time in the history of space exploration.

“NASA has a unique set of challenges as we seek to return to flight and expand our reach in space. What we do now will determine how well we meet those challenges in the future.

“That’s why I was pleased to see that the bill included \$150 million for a new servicing mission to the Hubble Space Telescope and a directive to NASA to devise a plan to send a crew to repair the Hubble Telescope after completion of the currently planned space shuttle mission.

“This funding is a clear recognition by the Committee of the unique role that the Hubble Space Telescope plays in broadening our scientific understanding of the observable universe. I applaud the call for a manned servicing mission to repair Hubble and extend its life so that future generations will be able to further understand and explore distant galaxies and the mysteries of space. I look forward to working with my colleagues to make sure that a new servicing mission is adequately funded and supported.

“The bill also renews focus on the significance and future of science research. While Mars/Moon exploration also continues to be a major focus of the work at NASA, we must not lose sight of the needs and promise of a core area of future inquiry such as science. This bill finds the right balance. Not only does the bill provide increase funding for NASA science programs, but it also directs NASA to develop a comprehensive science policy through 2016, complete with proposed missions, priorities, budget, and staff to bring much-needed focus back onto science research. This will go a long way in bringing new focus to science in the 21st Century.

“Finally, the bill provides funding and brings attention to such important areas as aeronautics,

education, and space operations and exploration activities that will help our nation further understand and explore distant galaxies and develop breakthrough technologies important to our health and security.

“This is a big step forward in our efforts to maintain innovation and ingenuity at NASA and in space and technology industries in the years ahead. Working together, Congress will pass a bill that would make NASA stronger and better prepared to face future challenges that it may confront.”

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